

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES FROM: September 9, 2019

Council called to order in regular session at 7:00 p.m. with Mayor John Heckerman presiding. Opening ceremony: Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mayor Heckerman. Roll call of members: Brenda Mackey, here; Connie Mehring, here; Jamin Roe, here; Jason Benedict, here; Matthew Shanahan, here. Also present were Village Administrator/Utilities Superintendent/Meter Reader Chad Johnson and Fiscal Officer/Utilities Clerk Ryan Harnishfeger. Visitors present: Sergeant James Connin from the Wood County Sheriff's Office; Luke and Matt Weaver for Eagle Scout project. Minutes from the August 19 meeting were approved as submitted.

FINANCE and CLAIMS: A spreadsheet of the current invoices was reviewed and approved by members. Councilwoman Mehring made a motion that these bills be allowed and orders drawn for same. Councilman Roe seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. Copies of the August Bank Reconciliation, Fund Status, Revenue Status, and Appropriation Status reports were given to Mayor Buehrer and the Finance Committee to review. A Staples Credit Card Reconciliation report for the payment due date 9/14/19 was given to Finance Committee Member Mackey to review.

Mayor Heckerman gave a first reading, by title only, of Resolution #904-19, a RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE AMOUNTS AND RATES AS DETERMINED BY THE BUDGET COMMISSION AND AUTHORIZING THE NECESSARY TAX LEVIES AND CERTIFYING THEM TO THE COUNTY AUDITOR AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. The 2020 amount approved for Tontogany's General Fund by the Budget Commission is \$8,265.44 (inside 10 mill limitation), and the approved rate is 1.20 (inside 10 mill limit). After a short discussion, Councilman Benedict made "a motion to suspend the rules for Resolution #904-19 and forego three readings for the reason that there are an insufficient number of meeting dates in order to hold three readings of this resolution before the county-imposed October 1, 2019 deadline for the authorization of necessary tax levies." Councilwoman Mehring seconded this motion. All voted in favor; motion carried. Councilman Benedict then made a motion to adopt Resolution #904-19. Councilwoman Mehring seconded this motion. All voted in favor; motion carried.

Mayor Heckerman gave a second reading, by title only, of Resolution #903-19, a RESOLUTION TO APPROVE PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES. This resolution authorizes the mayor to enter into an agreement for Public Defender services on behalf of the Village, which guarantees indigent persons charged with certain criminal offenses the right to legal counsel through the Wood County indigent defense program.

Mayor Heckerman invited Luke and Matt Weaver to speak to members about the Eagle Scout project of installing posts at Centennial Park. The Weavers reported that they removed all of the old posts, augured out the old holes, and put in new posts. However, they couldn't get through the concrete when trying to augur out more holes. They need a stronger, industrial-strength auger, but can't seem to find one. The Weavers said the auger they were using was smoking and they didn't want to keep using it and return it to Bee Gee Rental in bad condition. Councilman Roe said he put the Weavers in touch with Kyle Sherman, but the Weavers reported that they weren't getting help from Mr. Sherman, probably due to his being very busy, so they had given up on continuing to call him. Mr. Roe commented that Mr. Sherman agreed to give him an estimate to do the drainage project at Centennial Park, but we still have not received the estimate; Mr. Sherman just seems to be very busy. The Weavers said they wanted to get the council's input on what to do next. There was also a question about whether OUPS markings need to be done again, due to the time elapsed since the first ones were done. Members assured them that no more markings need to be done. Councilman Roe commented, as another possible option, that he has the card of a man with a business on Bishop Road, who installs fence posts for pastures. He has a post pounder that will drive a railroad tie into the ground. He charges \$10 to \$15 per post, so, it would add some expense to the village. Members suggested that maybe we just need to put in wire or chain and forget trying to put in extra new posts, leaving it similar to the way it was before. The Weavers commented that they were assured they would run into a lot more concrete if they dig holes for all of

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the new posts. Councilman Shanahan asked how it would affect the Eagle Scout project, if we were to adjust the way the project is to be done. The Weavers answered that they would need to look into it. Administrator Johnson said he would talk to Bowling Green Electric about the possibility of them drilling new holes for our posts, since they have equipment big enough to drill electric pole holes. The Weavers said they still need about 25 holes dug, each 30-inches deep. The decision was made that the Weavers would look into the scouting requirements on their end, while the village looks into how we wish the project to be finished, and the Weavers will come again at the next meeting on September 16. With nothing more to discuss, the Weavers left the meeting.

Copies of the August incident report were made available to members to review. Mayor Heckerman invited members to speak to Sergeant Connin about any concerns they may have. Councilman Shanahan reported speeding incidents happening on Crom Street and North Street during football season. Councilman Benedict reported people running the stop sign at the corner of Broad and Crom Street at about 15 mph almost every day. Sergeant Connin said he would pass the information on to the day shift patrols. Councilwoman Mackey reported that, often, on a home game night, between the release of kids from school and the time of the game, there is a lot of activity in town. Kids stay after school and don't get picked up until after the game. They may hang out at the carryout or at the park, not necessarily causing any problems. With nothing more to discuss, Mayor Heckerman thanked Sergeant Connin and he left the meeting.

Mayor Heckerman brought up the topic of water utility rates for discussion. Members each had a copy of a spreadsheet, created by Village Solicitor Paul Skaff, of current rates and calculated increases of 10%, 15%, 20%, and 25%. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger explained the numbers from Solicitor Skaff, including increases proposed for in-town residential, out-of-town residential, agricultural/industrial, tap fees, and system development fees. Mr. Harnishfeger pointed out that line maintenance fees were not included in the chart or in the proposed water rates ordinance, but should be added, if the council wants to increase those fees. Utilities Superintendent Johnson said he did not understand why the village charges only \$4,000 for an in-town tap fee, but charges \$8,000 for an out-of-town tap fee. He said they both cost the same amount when the same amount of work and parts are needed, so both should be at the \$8,000 price. Mayor Heckerman commented that we probably set the out-of-town taps higher because those customers don't have anything invested in the village. Mr. Harnishfeger commented that the tap fees have been the same since he became the utilities clerk in 2010. Members discussed the matter and concluded that \$4,000 is cheap compared to what Northwestern charges. Councilwoman Mackey commented that we could be losing money only charging \$4,000 in town. Members asked how much we have been paying Palmer to do taps. Mr. Harnishfeger said he didn't know exactly, but would have to research that. Mr. Johnson advised that the tap fee not only covers the cost of putting in a tap, but helps with the cost of maintaining the lines. He also pointed out that tap costs can vary, depending on how much work, boring, etc. is needed to get the tap done. Mayor Heckerman asked how we should deal with the line maintenance fee. Mr. Harnishfeger commented that the line maintenance fee needs to be increased to bring in extra needed funds to maintain the system, but a line maintenance fee increase alone wouldn't bring in enough income to get the water fund out of trouble. Mr. Johnson commented that line maintenance increases could help to pay for new water meters, for example. Mr. Johnson informed members that there are some old hydrants in town that need replaced, at a cost of about \$5,000 apiece. Councilwoman Mackey commented that she agreed with Councilwoman Mehring's suggestion at the last meeting to raise the regular water rates by at least 15%. She also asked what members thought about raising the residential line maintenance fee from \$10 to \$15 per month. After more discussion, members asked Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger to research how much was paid for recent in-town and out-of-town tap jobs, and how our current line maintenance fees are charged for residential meters and for larger meters, like at the school, and email the information to council members before the next meeting, so they can use it to make a more informed decision on how to deal with the water rates and fees. Councilman Roe summed up by saying we are leaning toward a 20%

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increase in the rates and a \$5 increase in the residential line maintenance fee. Members said we could look at revising the rates again next fall as needed. Councilman Roe asked if we needed to let the residents know about the new water rates. Councilwoman Mackey answered that she found a letter in her records from 2014, addressed to Tontogany Utilities Customers, apparently written by Craig Spoore, explaining why rates were being raised. The increase from Bowling Green was shown on the back of the letter. She gave a copy of the letter to Utilities Superintendent Johnson and asked him to adapt it for our purposes with the current rate increase we will be doing. Councilman Shanahan asked Mr. Johnson to have a copy of an updated letter ready for members to review at the next meeting. Mayor Heckerman then did a first reading, by title only, of Ordinance #905-19, an ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING NEW WATER RATES.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that a representative from the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation stopped in at the office last week to do a survey on how we operate. They found no faults or safety issues, especially since the village hires outside contractors to do almost everything. They just had one suggestion, that we supply a safety vest for Jim Head, so he will be more visible if he should step into the street while doing jobs for the town. Councilman Roe offered to give a vest to the town for this purpose.

Mayor Heckerman asked if we knew anything more about the Hefflinger bill for meter pit repair. Mr. Johnson said he spoke with Palmer about it and he hasn't heard anything back from him about a problem. He assumes Mr. Hefflinger paid the bill.

ZONING: Councilman Shanahan reported that Zoning Inspector Owens is in New York City this week. Mr. Owens did go and speak with the wife of the property owner at 18052 Broad Street about the commercial vehicles and other problems there that members discussed at the last meeting. They had a good conversation. Her biggest surprise was that they couldn't have all of the work vehicles there. Mr. Owens will follow up with a letter when he gets back from New York City. Administrator Johnson commented that he noticed that the property has been cleaned up a little bit already. Councilman Roe reported a couch sitting by the street on Main Street across from Mr. Heckerman's house. Mayor Heckerman replied that two days ago he spoke with the owner about it sitting there for a week and a half, and told him it had been sitting there for too long. Mr. Shanahan commented that Zoning Inspector Owens should be at the next meeting; he can follow up on the couch problem.

Councilman Shanahan reported that someone brought it to his attention over the weekend that the village hasn't done a large trash pickup in several years, whereas we used to do so. Mr. Shanahan asked if it would be worth looking into doing again. Mayor Heckerman responded that it cost \$2,500 and that is why we stopped doing it. Councilwoman Mackey added that people were bringing trash from outside of town as well, and it became too expensive.

Councilwoman Mehring reported that she spoke with two police officers about a neighbor who is burning garbage. She got a phone call from another neighbor who said they couldn't open their windows because the smell was so bad. It was at one of the houses across from the Post Office. The police officers told her they would check it out and get back to her. They suggested calling them to investigate when it is seen happening so they can go there right away at that time. Councilwoman Mackey added that you can also call the EPA.

UTILITIES: Mayor Heckerman reported that he spoke with Ray Thomas of L B Electric and he is no longer doing any electrical work for us. He is retired. He will help with our Christmas tree this year, but that is all. Councilwoman Mehring asked if he would help take down the village Christmas wreath. The mayor and members commented that Christmas is almost here, so we shouldn't take it down now. Ms. Mehring said the wreath needs a new bow. Councilwoman Mackey advised that we will need to find someone else to contract with to do the work L B Electric was doing. Mayor Heckerman answered that we could use Bowling Green Electric; we have used them before.

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Utilities Superintendent Johnson reported that we received the report back from the electric pole inspections. He will need to call Bowling Green Electric to do pole replacements for the bad poles. Mayor Heckerman asked him to ask them at the same time if they would be willing to do the street light repairs like L B Electric was doing for us. Councilman Roe asked if we had enough money for replacing the bad poles. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger replied that \$25,000 was appropriated for that purpose.

STREETS and ALLEYS: Councilman Shanahan reported that he followed up with Jeremy at CSX after our last meeting. He also talked with Todd Buehrer right after the last meeting. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger provided the information they needed, which Mr. Shanahan emailed to CSX. Jeremy responded back from CSX that that was all the information they needed. It didn't include the extra repairs needed that were found after the initial quote from Morlock; it was just the initial quote. It wouldn't be a good time to do repairs of Broad Street while CSX is working on the crossings anyway. Mayor Heckerman pointed out that there is a sidewalk they need to replace that they tore out when they fixed one of the crossings previously. Mr. Heckerman said he would call Tony Morlock for an updated quote tomorrow. Mr. Shanahan commented that, now that communications have been reopened with CSX, we will just keep working on it until the matter is taken care of.

SIDEWALKS and TREES: Councilwoman Mackey reported that she received a quote from Abe Rowe for taking out eight trees, including two scrub trees and some brush by the hall. The total quote is \$2,250. Mayor Heckerman asked if it included the oak tree on Main Street. Ms. Mackey answered that it does. Given the fact that Kevin, next door to the hall, offered to pay half on taking out the trees next to the hall that are partly on his property, Abe Rowe said he would contact Kevin with an amount for half of the cost of taking out those trees. Then we can pay the whole bill and Kevin can write the village a check for his part. Ms. Mackey said she asked Mr. Rowe for a timeline and he said he could probably start the third week in September. Ms. Mackey asked Mr. Rowe to talk to Kevin far enough before the job to give him time to get his stuff moved out of the way so Mr. Rowe can get in there to do the cutting. The total job will include removal of all of the brush except the big pieces, which will be left for people to take away. Stumps will also be ground out.

Councilman Roe reported that Envirocare called him back about what they think killed our oak tree. They came and looked at the tree and said they think what killed it is oak wilt disease. It was probably picked up from a beetle. It only happens if you prune the tree during the growing season, which makes open wounds that the beetles like. No other trees seem to be in danger, so we can just cut it down. Councilwoman Mackey added that Abe Rowe told her he would do some research on the oak tree too. Councilman Shanahan made a motion to accept Abe Rowe's quote of \$2,250 for tree removal. Councilman Benedict seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried.

DRAINS and SEWERS: Councilman Shanahan asked if we had heard back from Kyle Sherman about the drainage project at Centennial Park. Councilman Roe answered that he had not heard back from Kyle after contacting him about four times. He met him at the park and he did the hard work; now it is just a matter of getting a quote to us. Mayor Heckerman suggested maybe it is time for us to seek a quote from someone else; he said he would call Palmer tomorrow. He also said he would be calling Morlock for a quote. Councilman Roe asked him, when he talks to Tony Morlock, to ask him when he thinks it would be a good time for us to put down striping on the resurfaced basketball court; and to also ask him about when to seal it, in relation to putting down striping. Councilwoman Mackey asked Mr. Heckerman to also ask Mr. Morlock what his recommendation is about sealer, which in the past came off black on the kids that played on it. Is there a product now that doesn't do that? She also noted to everyone that we submitted a park grant request for the cost of striping the basketball court.

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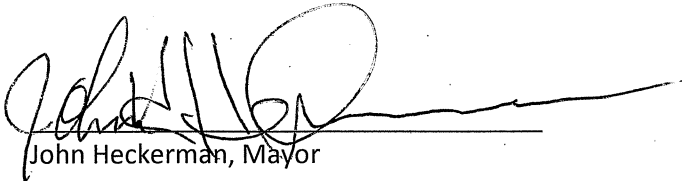
CITY HALL and PARKS: Councilman Shanahan reported that the park grant requests for 2020 have been turned in. We asked for new striping for the court, new volleyball and soccer nets, and a new load of sand for the volleyball court. Councilwoman Mackey added that we also asked for a grant for repairing the park benches. Mr. Shanahan said he turned in the park grant applications on August 30th, as well as the final report on the use of the 2019 disk golf course grant money. The Sentinel did a story on our disk golf course last Thursday. The course is in; we still need to get the signage for it. Councilwoman Mackey reported that, after the grant requests were submitted, Ron Mackey informed her that the shelter house is in dire need of a new roof. Mayor Heckerman commented that he didn't think the roof structure was bad, but just the shingles. Members suggested getting a quote from Rick Crozier. Mayor Heckerman said he would call him and have him look at it to see how urgently it needs repaired.

Councilman Shanahan asked what the story was behind the electric poles laying out back behind the hall. Mayor Heckerman responded that they are our poles, for emergencies. Mr. Shanahan said they don't look like they are in very good shape. Mr. Heckerman said at least one is rotted. Mr. Shanahan asked if they have to lay behind the hall, or if they could be stored somewhere else. Utilities Superintendent Johnson said he would ask Bowling Green Electric what the story is on those poles.

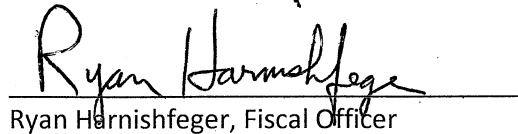
Councilman Roe asked what we intend to do with the old posts from Centennial Park. Mr. Shanahan responded that the scouts' understanding is that the village will take care of disposing of the old posts. Mayor Heckerman said Jim Head will be hauling away the old posts for us. Mr. Roe pointed out that, if there are any of the new poles left, due to the project being changed, we will have to figure out what to do with them, possibly advertise them for sale in the paper, or see if the company will take them back.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger told members that he forgot to advertise the vacant council seat. He asked if members would like for a legal ad or a news brief to be placed in the paper. Members said a news brief would work. Mr. Harnishfeger said he would do a news brief and put it on the website, as well as put up a flyer. He will ask interested persons to contact us by phone or email.

With nothing further to discuss, Mayor Heckerman declared the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.



John Heckerman, Mayor



Ryan Harnishfeger, Fiscal Officer